

MAINE PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION



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TO: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee
RE: Neither For Nor Against LD 1202: An Act to Establish the African American Studies Advisory Council and Provide Funding to Support African American Studies
DATE: April 22, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Dr. Holly Blair, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Principals' Association – Professional Division. The MPA represents more than 700 PreK-12 Principals and Assistant Principals, CTE Directors and Assistant Directors, and Athletic Directors of public and private schools in Maine.

The MPA Legislative Committee is neither for nor against LD 1202. We are supportive of the creation of the African American Studies Advisory Council and believe that it is critically important to provide additional resources and support to Maine schools in this area. This work will contribute to broader learning and understanding and benefit students and educators alike.

When we testified during the 131st Legislature, we strongly encouraged the inclusion of an administrator on the Advisory Council in addition to the positions listed in the bill. We continue to believe this is an important consideration. A building administrator brings valuable, practical experience and perspective regarding curriculum implementation, professional development, and the day-to-day realities of school operations. Including an administrator would provide an additional, necessary voice to help ensure the effective implementation of African American studies in Maine schools.

However, we do have a concern with the requirement for an annual audit included in the bill. No other content area in Maine requires such an audit, and we do not believe one should be required specifically for one content area. This creates an unnecessary burden and an inequitable precedent in how curriculum areas are treated. Maine already has an established process for curriculum development and review through the Maine Learning Results. In addition, the passing of this bill would result in additional financial pressures on the General Fund—resources that are needed to support all Maine schools.

For these reasons, we are submitting this testimony neither for nor against LD 1202. While we support the creation and funding of the Advisory Council, we respectfully request the Committee consider removing the audit requirement and adding an administrative voice to the Council's membership.

Please note that this testimony was submitted based off of the original language of the bill and not additional amendments that may be presented.